
RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of the
Parks, Trails & Recreation Commission of the
City of Cherry Hills Village, Colorado
Held on Thursday, September 9, 2021 at 5:30 p.m.

PARKS, TRAILS AND RECREATION COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING

Vice-Chair Tory Leviton called the meeting to order at 5:37 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Vice-Chair Tory Leviton, Commissioners Robert Eber, Fred Wolfe and Chelsea Scott. Also present were Emily Black, Parks and Recreation Coordinator, Jeff Roberts, Parks Operations Supervisor and Pamela Broyles, Administrative Assistant. Commissioner Aron Grodinsky joined the meeting at 5:57 p.m.

Absent: Chair Stephanie Dahl, Commissioner Kate Murphy

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The PTRC conducted the Pledge of Allegiance.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

There was no audience participation.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Robert Eber moved, seconded by Commissioner Chelsea Scott to approve the following items on the Consent Agenda:

1. Approval of Minutes – August 12, 2021

The motion passed unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a. PTRC Projects & Priorities – 2022

Coordinator Black presented the updated list of the 2022 Projects and Priorities for PTRC. She stated that based on the discussion at the August meeting she added a “Visioning” category to the 2022 priorities. She noted that there was an increase in the amount budgeted for the High Line Canal Irrigation Project as a new water tap is needed.

Aron Grodinsky moved, seconded by Chelsea Scott to approve the 2022 Priorities for the Parks, Trails, and Recreation Commission.

The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

- a. High Line Canal – Stormwater presentation by Harriet LaMair

Harriet LaMair, Executive Director of the High Line Canal Conservancy stated that the City is in the process of redoing the Master Plan that references stormwater in its survey.

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She stressed the importance of the community having a conceptual understanding of the transformation of the Canal going from irrigation to stormwater.

Director LaMair reviewed two plans for stormwater:

1. The Community Vision Plan

The plan includes over 5,000 comments from residents along the 71-mile stretch of the Canal that resulted in the Framework Plan

2. The Framework Plan

The Plan for the High Line Canal.

Director LaMair presented a graph showing the drainages that cross the High Line Canal to demonstrate the amount of water that could be going into the Canal. She shared a visual of what the Canal might look like in the future without any water in the Canal from stormwater. She stressed the importance of stormwater in the Canal to sustain existing and new trees.

The following recommendations are proposed for the Village:

- 4 water quality berms
- 3 constructed overflows
- 1 spillway

Director LaMair noted that the estimate for the plan is about \$800,000 for the capital improvements needed to build structures for stormwater in Cherry Hills Village. She said an additional \$8,000 per mile, per year is needed for maintenance of the Canal that does not include tree maintenance. She explained that historically Denver Water was under a legal requirement where no formalized inflows could go into the Canal. She said Denver Water now has an Agreement that allows them to capture stormwater provided it is only held in the Canal for 72 hours.

Director LaMair discussed the Request for Proposals (RFP) that the City recently put out to create a stormwater model that will help to identify the capacity in the High Line Canal for water from stormwater in the Village.

Commissioner Eber asked how increasing water to Three Pond Park could potentially create flooding on private property.

Josh Phillips, Director of Planning and Implementation, explained that an overflow at Blackmer Commons would clear more capacity in the Canal to carry more water and help to alleviate the spill situation by sending less water through Three Pond Park.

Director LaMair added that the City of Greenwood Village could also agree to keep more water which would reduce the capacity issue in Cherry Hills Village.

Commissioner Wolfe asked if all of the proposed improvements were implemented, would the High Line Canal have water all the time.

Director LaMair responded that water will only be in the Canal during major storm events. She explained that the feasibility study for the stormwater transition stated that the Canal would be wet 100 more days per year than it would be without stormwater. She stressed that it is important to understand that wet does not mean running water.

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Commissioner Wolfe asked if jurisdictions would take a more active role in maintaining the vegetation on both sides of the Canal.

Director LaMair explained that major storms can cause debris to flow down from other jurisdictions. She said the Canal is considered a wildlife corridor and some of the debris is important to the wildlife. She said the debris would be managed to the extent that stormwater could flow down the Canal.

Director Phillips noted that many of the jurisdictions entered into a centralized maintenance contract so contractors will clear debris from the channel, treat invasive weeds and inspect and prune trees. He said as part of the agreement contractors will make three passes on the Canal each year to remove debris.

Director LaMair clarified that each jurisdiction has to opt into an agreement to manage stormwater and that is part of what Cherry Hills Village is now evaluating.

Director LaMair reported that approximately 10 miles of the Canal are currently being managed for stormwater by other jurisdictions. She shared images and reviewed advancements that other jurisdictions have made with stormwater along the High Line Canal.

Director LaMair listed a host of benefits to putting water in the High Line Canal including water for trees, improving air quality, reusing old infrastructure, improving wildlife habitat, and environmental health benefits. She explained that the 72-hour hold that is allowed for stormwater is meant to filter the water and make it approximately 40% cleaner than it was before entering the Canal.

Director Phillips reiterated the environmental benefits of stormwater in the Canal. He also acknowledged the health benefits of the Canal with access to recreation and increased exercise. He pointed out that the cost to remove trees if there is no water in the Canal is estimated at \$4,000 per Cottonwood.

Commissioner Eber brought up concerns with community health benefits because of the increase in trash that will come down the Canal through stormwater.

Josh responded that there is already a lot of water entering the Canal. He pointed out that the water quality would improve because of the berms. He said by entering into the centralized contract the cleanup of debris would be more than what Denver Water is currently doing.

Director LaMair added that the stormwater will be pretreated and by managing the water in the Canal there would be less trash.

Commissioner Wolfe suggested that to create a well-maintained Canal he would concentrate efforts on places where there is a bridge going over the Canal where people have a visual of the Canal.

Director LaMair stated that the next step for the Village is to design and assess the cost for stormwater and determine how the Community can work with Denver Water to take on the responsibility. She asserted that the contract for maintenance is an important first step.

Director LaMair said the goal is to transform more of the Canal and to evaluate the pilot projects and learn from these projects. She noted that City Council will be considering a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the Canal to formalize a collaboration and create a structure for communication.

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Commissioner Scott asked how the \$8,000 for maintenance would be funded, what other municipalities are doing to fund it and if one impacts the other.

Director LaMair replied that each jurisdiction can be distinct. She suggested that the Village could look at some of the South Suburban money to fund stormwater. She said the High Line Conservancy is also creating a fund to help local governments with maintenance costs and the Mile High Flood District is another a potential funding partner.

Commissioner Eber noted that the estimated \$800,000 capital improvement costs for overflow infrastructure is a one-time cost.

Parks Supervisor Roberts stated that the City currently spends approximately \$4,000 annually on hazard reduction trimming. He said the cost for tree removal would be hard to estimate because it depends on the size of the tree and how difficult it is to get to.

Coordinator Black clarified that Denver Water is currently responsible for the majority of tree care in the Canal. She said the City will only do additional tree work if the trail is blocked or there is a danger to the public.

Director LaMair pointed out that many of the local governments that entered into agreements with Denver Water negotiated with Denver Water to remove trees that they knew would need to be removed for years to come prior to accepting responsibility.

Commissioner Eber brought up the \$25,000 funding that City Council approved for stormwater and asked how the money will be used.

Coordinator Black replied that Council budgeted \$25,000 for the City to do a more in-depth study of stormwater in the High Line Canal to get a firm idea of the costs moving forward. The study will determine if each berm is required and if there is some flexibility. The study will also make sure there are no impacts to neighboring properties.

Director LaMair said the study will also address waterflow and flooding issues in the past.

Commissioner Eber asked if there is an opportunity for the City to match funds with Mile High Flood Control District to help the City with maintenance obligations on the Canal.

Director LaMair stated that Mile High Flood Control District will be a source of potential funding for improvements but probably not for maintenance.

Director Phillips noted that a relationship has already been established with Mile High Flood Control District as they are the holder of the centralized contracts for maintenance on the Canal.

Director LaMair clarified that stormwater can be done in phases and the City does not have to come up with the full amount immediately. She said there is also potential to partnership with Arapahoe County Open Space to match some of the funding.

b. Next Phase of Trail Renaming

Commissioner Wolfe reviewed the history of the trail naming project. He stated the numbering system is confusing and he is working to rename the trails. He said he started with the Village Trail and added signage. He then named 8 different trails within the Village. He explained that the next stage is to take one trail at a time and determine signage, size, and location.

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Commissioner Wolfe shared a plan for the Woodie Hollow Park Trail that includes 9 sign locations. He demonstrated where the Woodie Hollow Park Trail starts and ends and that it is 1.4 miles and it takes 30 minutes to walk. His plan shows where the signposts should be installed, and he believes a trash can should be added at each sign location.

Commissioner Wolfe shared an example of a sign with the 3 things that he believes people need to constantly be reminded of on the trails:

1. Dogs must be on leash
2. Please pick up dog poop bags
3. No E-Bikes allowed

He stated that his idea is to do the same trail signage on every trail to keep all signage consistent.

Commissioner Scott commented that she agrees with the messaging but expressed concern that if the message is too busy people will not take the time to read the signs and they may not be as effective.

Commissioner Wolfe said he would like to address the issue by making the sign posts taller and painting them so they are more visible throughout the Village.

Commissioner Scott said she likes the idea of using different colors on the signs so they are easier to navigate.

Commissioner Eber commented on the signs at Cherrymoor. He said he understands wanting to avoid the safety issue of crossing University Boulevard, but he believes a lot of connectivity is lost by having people go to the existing light on University. He said he would only be in favor of crossing University if it is done in conjunction with CDOT to have a safe passage across University.

Commissioner Wolfe stated that he does not believe crossing University is unsafe and there does not need to be a light or a painted crosswalk on the street. He said a sign on both sides of University that says "Cross with Caution" is the only thing needed.

Coordinator Black commented that she likes the idea of focusing on the trail at Woodie Hollow Park that navigates people to the new City Hall and John Meade Park. She reminded PTRC that at the last meeting the Commission approved signage for the trail system and staff has already ordered the signs and has started installing them. She explained that the signs are designed to go on existing posts in neutral colors except for the new "No E-Bike" sign. She suggested that the signage should stay the same to be consistent.

Commissioner Wolfe clarified that the signs the Commission approved are adequate and he is proposing that the additional directional signs be added below them.

Commissioner Eber suggested that the plan for the trail should continue past Woodie Hollow Park so the people in the very western part of the Village have a sense of trail connectivity.

Commissioner Wolfe commented that he would eventually like to add a sign at Belleview where the Woodie Hollow Park Trail ends that directs people to Woodie Hollow Park and onto the High Line Canal.

Commissioner Eber stressed that he believes the City's on-street trails are just as important as the bridle trails for connectivity and he would like to see them more formalized.

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Ms. Black suggested that Commissioner Wolfe work with Parks Operations Supervisor Jeff Roberts to order the signs for the Woodie Hollow Park Trail.

REPORTS

a. PTRC Chair Report

There was nothing to report.

b. Commission Members Report

Commissioner Eber reported that the issue regarding Cantitoe will be discussed by the Planning and Zoning Commission (P&Z) at their meeting on Tuesday, September 14th.

Commissioner Eber explained that P&Z is the formal entity for the Master Plan and the Citizen Advisory Task Force (CAT) is working from the citizens' standpoint. He stated that there will be an open house to receive public comment for the Master Plan on September 29th from 5-7 p.m. in John Meade Park.

Commissioner Eber stated that City Council discussed Quincy Farm at their last meeting and agreed that the City of Cherry Hills Village would only consider proposals that do not involve the transfer of title away from the City. He reiterated that it is important for PTRC to have a strong voice regarding Quincy Farm. He said he would also like the Commission to have a better understanding of the budget so they can make intelligent decisions and more prepared to answer questions from citizens.

Commissioner Eber announced that the City recently received the Project of the Year award for Alan Hutto and John Meade Park. He thanked City staff for all of their work on the project.

Commissioner Leviton stressed the importance of the Master Plan process where citizens' voices can be heard.

The Commission asked if a questionnaire for the Master Plan has been mailed yet.

Coordinator Black confirmed that P&Z is working on a draft questionnaire but it has not been sent out to the public yet.

c. Staff Report

i. Quincy Farm Process

Coordinator Black reiterated that Catherine Anderson left Quincy Farm to the City through a life estate with a conservation easement that cannot be changed. She stated that Council had a discussion on the original Request for Proposal (RFP) where the City could consider transferring the property to another party. She said Council voted to amend the RFP so they would no longer consider any proposals that involved transferring title of the property. She emphasized that an important note in Council's motion is that they gave anyone that had previously submitted the opportunity to resubmit their proposal with the transfer of title taken out of it.

Ms. Black noted that the City Council meeting on September 21st to discuss Quincy Farm will be recorded and can be watched virtually. She confirmed that no decisions will be made at the meeting.

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Ms. Black announced that City Hall and John Meade Park won the American Society of Landscape Architects Presidential Award of Excellence for the Colorado chapter, and the City also received a American Public Works Association Award. She said The High Line Canal Working Group won an award for the Hampden Underpass in recognition of stewardship and conservation, protection of the outdoors and improving quality of life for Arapahoe County residents.

ii. High Line Canal MOU

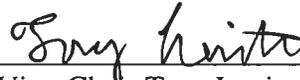
Coordinator Black reported that the MOU for the High Line Canal Conservancy and the High Line Canal Collaborative is going before City Council on November 2nd. She said the MOU will solidify the structure of the Canal Collaborative and how all entities will work together moving forward.

iii. *Crew Series*

Coordinator Black announced that the Art Commission will come before PTRC at its October meeting to talk about relocating the *Crew Series* sculptures into John Meade Park. She said the sculptures are currently on the corner of Quincy and Holly.

ADJOURNMENT

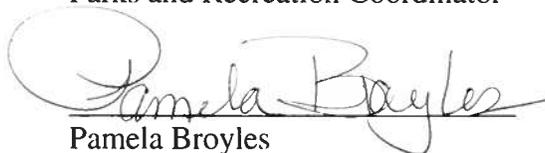
The meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m. The next PTRC meeting is scheduled for October 14th at 5:30 p.m.



Vice-Chair Tory Leviton



Emily Black
Parks and Recreation Coordinator



Pamela Broyles
Administrative Assistant